

From: Jason R Lee
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/9/02 10:14pm
Subject: I oppose the Microsoft settlement as it currently stands

Hello,

I am a computer professional that works out of San Francisco. I would just like to say that when Microsoft was found to be a monopoly, I was very happy. I grew up using Microsoft and Apple products - starting when I was 12 years old. From that time though, I have seen Microsoft transform from just just 'another' software vendor, to a company that rolls over anyone they see fit.

I was there when were being investigated by the government during the DOS times. I was there during the 'Office wars' - which Microsoft clearly came out ahead (I mean, if you owned the code to the operating system, how can't you come out ahead). It didn't suprise me to hear that other Office developers were getting API (Application Programming Interface) documentation (and *not* getting undocumented APIs at all - unlike the Microsoft teams) late. And the list goes on and on and on.

So, naturally, even though I grew up with Microsoft in the computer industry, I was naturally happy to hear they were finally ruled a monopoly. They are. Plain and simple. I cannot buy a big vendor computer without having to pay the 'Microsoft tax' - every machine comes bundled with some sort of Windows Operating System. This year, instead of buying a PC, I bought a Mac, in direct response to the Microsoft tax. Unfortunately, my Mac does not do the same things as my PC does, so I'm finding certain hard to accomplish, so I have to work on my work machines that do have a Microsoft OS on them.

For me, a computer professional, I can handle other Operating Systems and computers. But for someone like my sister or mother and father, that's a different story. They have no choice. They have no recourse. They have to take what's given to them to communicate and participate in the 'digital age'. If they had a choice, I would feel much better.

WindowsXP: B-A-D! Another area that really raises flags that the ruling does not cover is Microsoft's push into digital media. If they get their way, just like in the computer industry, then I'm sure I'll see more 'Microsoft Powered' devices on the horizon. Limiting my choice of audio and video codecs; image compression algorithms; services that support these. Plus, Microsoft requires that in order to use XP, I have to have a Passport account. This is really scary. 2001 has been such a debacle from Microsoft in the security arena. Yet, very few seem to be raising the issue of one company owning a database (and their track record shows that they are lousy at security - even their own servers) of my information. If I buy XP, then I should own it. I should not be *required* to register for an online ID to activate it.

For me, a computer professional, I can get around many Microsoft issues. Over the past few years, I've watched the web start as a platform independent medium, to a heavily Microsoft controlled one. Another way for them to own the desktop. It is sad because if you ask anyone who has used the web from the beginning, they will acknowledge just how dependent it is on Microsoft Internet Explorer. There used to be a choice, however.

Now the justice department has set, in my opinon, the wheels in motion to let Microsoft continue on their path of, basically, domination of the PC and media industries. There are judges that are not qualified to make decisions on behalf of the American public regarding this matter. They do not understand the implications of this ruling nor the technologies involved. I for one feel that I must voice my opinion, as a

computer professional and someone who has used countless Microsoft products over the years, and say that this ruling is inadequate and does not do what it was intended to do.

Microsoft has been ruled as a monopoly. This is fact and cannot be changed. They should be now dealt with accordingly just like other landmark cases - AT&T, Standard Oil - were. This will NOT hurt the industry. In fact, competition is what drives our great economy. Let's have more of it. The American people deserve it. We demand it!

Thank you.

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